Chapter 14
Leadership

Learning objectives

After reading through this chapter you will be able to:

- **Differentiate between management and leadership**
- **Describe stages of project management**
- **Discuss the appropriateness of project management approaches for providing leadership in the event environment**
- **Describe context factors for event leaders**
- **Describe theories of leadership and their relevance to the event industry**
- **Prepare leadership training.**

Introduction

In this chapter we will look at the topic of leadership. In some respects this is quite problematic as so much has been written on the subject, but with the traditional business in mind. In the normal business environment, everything is pretty stable: policies and procedures are in place and there are ready-made systems for dealing with market force changes. Even if staff turnover is high, many organizational characteristics remain unchanged. Systems and procedures in hospitals, banks, supermarkets and fast food outlets come to mind. In these organizations, there is generally a legacy on which to build and move forward, and the organizational culture is well established.

For many events, however, it is a ground-up development, sometimes at an alarming pace. This involves new venues, policies, operational procedures and, most importantly, new temporary people. While some events, such as small meetings held in hotels and exhibitions staged at convention centres, have ready-made formulas, the majority of events, including diverse events in arts and entertainment, are unique in concept and execution, thus requiring flexible leadership.

Management or leadership?

Most people would agree that not every manager is a leader (although he or she should be) and that every leader is not a manager (some workers appoint themselves

to this role). Informal leaders often emerge in the event environment: for example, an experienced business person might step in to lead a group of volunteers where there appears to be a leadership vacuum. The problematic informal leader is one who takes the lead, but is essentially clueless!

Management is generally characterized as tactical, i.e. following the processes of planning, organizing, leading and controlling. Planning involves setting the direction and operationalizing organizational strategies; organizing means creating structures and assigning tasks; leading means inspiring effort; and controlling ensures that tasks are completed (see Figure 14.1). From this can be seen that leading is part of a manager's role. Some are better at it than others!

Project management was discussed in Chapter 3 because of its similarity to event management, but here we will outline the five phases of project management to see what they can tell us about leadership:

1 *Initiating*. During this phase the vision for the project is developed and the goals are established. The core planning team is in place and the planning process begins.
2 *Planning*. Work breakdown is analysed, resources are allocated and schedules are developed. During this phase tasks and activities that lead to project goals are defined more clearly. Throughout this phase there is an emphasis on determining the scope of work.
3 *Executing*. Here the work is completed according to the project plan. The focus is on task completion, meeting milestones and managing critical paths. Communication is vitally important during this phase.
4 *Controlling*. Monitoring the outcomes achieved, rescheduling and reallocating resources occurs during the controlling phase, helping to keep the project on track. Where project goals are varied, approval is required from stakeholders. Note that in the event environment a project timeline overrun is seldom possible; the media and the audience are waiting for the performance to begin. Viewers around the world are ready for kickoff!
5 *Closing*. Before the team is disbanded, the project needs to be reviewed, bills paid and people acknowledged. An evaluation of the project is essential, the final report being the legacy of achievement and results.
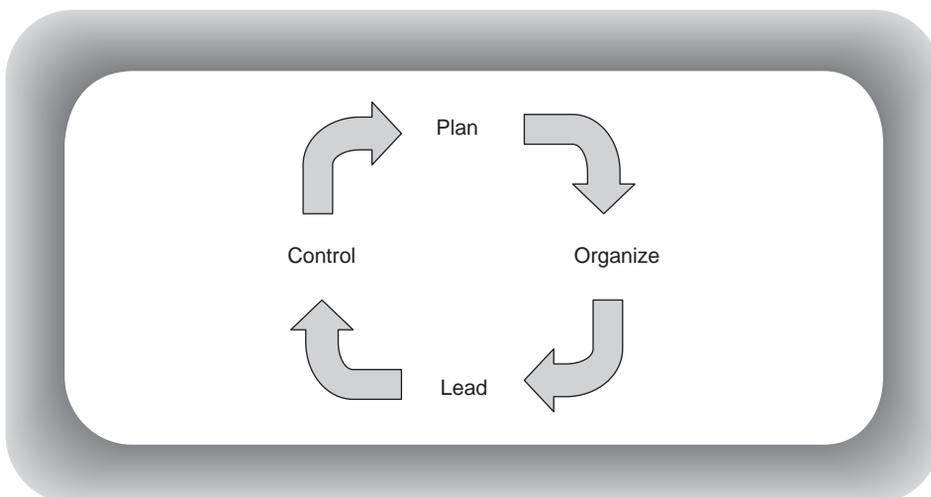

Figure 14.1 Management

Readers will notice that throughout these phases, the issue of leadership does not emerge clearly and the process appears quite clinical. Perhaps this is because projects in information technology or engineering are not as creative, complex, problematic, dynamic or stakeholder reliant as special events. However, this is doubtful, because vision and leadership are required in all workplaces, particularly when working on ground-breaking projects. Thomsett (2002), in his discussion on the project management revolution, talks about the increasing technical complexity of projects making it impossible for project managers to undertake technical reviews. He differentiates between content and context. Content includes the project tasks, the technical deliverables, while context involves the business, social and political environment of the project. He argues that the role of the project manager is shifting to ensuring that the project achieves its business goals: 'Build a relationship with your stakeholders and you will be doing your job. It is all about relationships' (p. 26). In fact, he goes further to suggest that the less the project manager knows about the technical details the better! Thus the project manager's role is all about power and influence, about making things happen. Thomsett concludes by pointing out that leadership is about change whereas management is about order and consistency.

Other authors highlight the association between leadership and vision. Schermerhorn *et al.* (2004) suggest that visionary leadership involves having clear ideas for new directions and being able to commit others to the fulfilment of these ideas. Christenson and Walker (2004, p. 45) emphasize the importance of vision in project success: 'We argue that much of the skill of project management leadership is about ensuring that the project need is adequately articulated into a project vision statement that facilitates enthusiasm and commitment for its successful realization.

In this chapter we will look in more detail at leadership in the event context, sources of power, and old and new theories of leadership, including contemporary ideas about transformational leadership.

Case study 14.1 illustrates contemporary views on visionary leadership.

Case study 14.1

Edinburgh Festival 2005 – an example of leadership style

'Most critics over here are stupid,' Danielsen fumed in the Edinburgh press. 'There's not the widespread culture of cinematic criticism that there is in Europe.' Speaking to The Australian *in Edinburgh on the weekend as the film festival drew to a close, Danielsen said: 'I want the film festival to speak with one voice and that voice has to be mine. I'm not saying that because I'm a megalomaniac. Film festivals are usually bland, they are run by conciliation, compromise and committee. If you are taking a pay cheque as the artistic director, you have to have the balls to stand up and say this is good and this is not, or this is in and this is out.'*

(Emma-Kate Symons, *The Age*, 30 August 2005)

Reflective practice 14.1
1 Summarize the issues emerging from this case study.
2 Explain the festival director's vision.

Definitions of leadership

'Leadership is the ability to inspire confidence and support among the people who are needed to achieve organizational goals' (DuBrun, 2004, p. 12); it is about the capacity of an individual to inspire and motivate. As stated earlier, leadership can be exhibited by non-managerial personnel such as union leaders. In recent years researchers have looked at leadership in terms of 'near' and 'far' leadership (Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalf, 2005). They have done this because most previous analysis has been of very senior executives and they believe that the focus for leadership study should be 'near leadership', that is at lower levels of the organizational structure where leaders define organizational reality rather than exert wide-ranging influence over goal achievement.

The concept of 'followership' has also been introduced in more recent times, possibly in response to the diverse nature of the workforce. Leadership and 'followership' are distributed through every level of organizations.

Recent studies are more inclusive of gender and culture (Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalf, 2005; White *et al.*, 2001). The women's perspective claims that finding collaborative, interdependent relationships between leader and followers is more common in gender inclusive research. It also suggests that linear models of group development, particularly those that view power struggles as one of these phases, are unsuited to the modern work environment. In start-up organizations, in particular, mutual learning occurs and the interactive leader works on building consensus, inclusion and participation (White *et al.*, 2001).

Leadership is variously defined as:

- Exerting influence
- Having followers
- Lifting people to a new level
- Persuading others to act towards achieving a common goal
- Leading by example so that others follow.

The theme of influence is found in most definitions.

Organizational contexts for leadership

Before looking at leadership theory, past and present, let us revisit the topic of the event context discussed in Chapter 1. Here we will contrast various contexts for leadership: long-life organizations, short-life organizations and organizations manned primarily by volunteers.

Shone and Parry (2004) use the description 'short-life' to describe the special event context. This is a helpful basis on which to review leadership literature since the short-life organization is quite different from the long-life organization, which has been the basis for most leadership research.

Long-life organizations

Strategic planning for a long-life, stable organization requires a vision of the future in which the organization operates: the internal and external forces that might impact on the organization as time progresses; competitive forces; and responses that the organization may need to make to remain ahead of the game. This is generally the role of executives in large corporations, such as media, finance and telecommunications. However, this is also the general direction for many event suppliers, such as hire companies, who plan to run their organizations over a long period and remain profitable in a changing climate.

Short-life organizations (project based)

In contrast to long-life organizations, most events and event organizations do not operate on the scale of major corporations. Rather, their vision is more creative than strategic. As we have seen, many events have project characteristics, such as defined timelines and resources. In this context, leadership is about harnessing energy and commitment to achieve the creative vision of the director (Shone and Parry, 2004). These authors stress the non-routine and unique features of special events, while Watt (1998) stresses the complexity and challenge associated with staging a unique event.

Volunteer-based organizations

When people are not paid they are not easily coerced into doing things. In fact, to keep attrition of the workforce to a minimum, programmes need to be designed to reward and retain volunteers for the period of the event. Leadership is vitally important in the volunteer-based organization in conveying the event's purpose, as volunteers frequently cite their commitment to an ideal as their primary motivation for event volunteering (Bussell and Forbes, 2001; Elstad, 2003).

Leadership is tested in an environment in which many of the event components are outsourced to contractors and subcontractors. As with volunteers, contractors are not paid staff of the organization and therefore highly effective communication, negotiation and conflict management skills are needed to manage them. The earlier definition of leadership is useful in that it referred to 'the people who are needed to achieve organizational goals' and is thus inclusive of contractor employees.

Leadership is also tested when an event organization shifts into emergency mode, for example, in the case of a fire, bomb threat or crowd control issue. When there are sudden and dramatic threats such as these, leadership is sometimes handed over to other authorities such as emergency services, as a military-style command and control mode is generally more useful in response to this type of situation.

Sources of power

A leader has various sources of power. The most common in most organizations is the legitimate power of employer over employee. This power is of course limited in the case of volunteers and contractor representatives.

In the event environment, as in most organizations, influence can be exerted in a number of ways depending on the power source (Mintzberg, 1983):

- Legitimate power comes from the person's place in the managerial hierarchy and is vested in the position. People working as police officers, fire fighters, etc. also carry legitimate power vested in them through legislation.
- Reward power is the realm of leaders who are in a position to provide rewards, both tangible (salary increase, prize, bonus) and intangible (praise, recommendation).
- Coercive power is the ability to use negative means to control behaviour. These can include criticism, demotion, written warnings and ultimately dismissal.
- Expert power is gained by a leader through the admiration by subordinates of his or her expertise and knowledge.
- Information power is achieved through the access to and control of information – those 'in the know' have more data on which to base decisions and to exert their power.
- Referent power comes from loyalty and admiration. This leader is admired and people identify with him or her.

In most situations subordinates will resist coercion (and volunteers will simply walk off the job), while referent and expert power are most likely to lead to commitment.

Theoretical models of leadership

The following theories of leadership are summarized more or less in historical sequence. The evolution of leadership theory has resulted from changes in society, including changes to work practices and increased diversity in the workforce.

Leadership traits

Early theorists were keen to identify the traits of highly effective leaders, as they assumed that people with these traits would become equally effective leaders. Some of the traits identified were confidence, decisiveness and charisma. Edwin Locke (2000) identified the following personality traits among successful leaders: drive, self-confidence, creativity and cognitive ability, among others. More recent work in the United Kingdom has led to the development of leadership scales in which personal qualities include being honest and consistent, acting with integrity, being decisive, inspiring others and resolving complex problems (Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalf, 2005).

Emotional intelligence is a construct that has great popular appeal – managing one's emotions and having empathy for others are believed to improve interpersonal effectiveness. Goleman (1995) suggests that there are four dimensions to emotional intelligence: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management.

Goldblatt (2005) lists the most important leadership qualities as integrity, confidence, persistence, collaboration, problem solving, communication skills and vision. As he suggests, 'it is important to note that event leadership is neither charisma or

control, the ability to command nor the talent to inspire. Rather, it is that rare commodity, like good taste, that one recognizes when one sees it' (p. 153).

Leadership style

Leadership-style theorists looked at the two dimensions of leadership, concern for production (task orientation) and concern for people. The best known of these is the Leadership Grid of Blake and Mouton (1985). Their argument was that the best leader would exhibit concern for both people and production, with a resultant team management style.

Contingency theories

Recognizing that different contexts required different leadership approaches led to the development of contingency theories. Broadly speaking, contingency theories suggest that leaders need to be responsive to a range of situational variables. Many such variables exist. Fiedler (1967) matched style (task orientation and relationship orientation) to situational variables of leader–member relations, task structure and position power. The Hersey-Blanchard (1993) model, on the other hand, looked at the maturity of followers. Here it was suggested that new (low job maturity) employees needed a telling style of leadership, graduating to selling and participative styles. However, once an employee had high job maturity, little guidance was required and a delegating style was appropriate. Looking at the relevance of this approach to the events business, it is clear that most personnel, who see the event infrastructure only just before the event and are briefed only minutes before the gates open, would need a telling style of clear instructions.

In this book there has been much discussion about the event context. There are many situational factors that could be considered in relation to leadership style: primarily the amount of time available to issue instructions and make decisions; and the level of risk associated with, for example, delegating a decision about crowd management.

Transformational leadership

Burns *et al.* (2004) and Avolio and Bass (1994) have worked on the concepts of transactional and transformational leadership. *Transactional leadership* is characterized by rewards contingent upon goal achievement, while *transformational leadership* requires that the leader convince followers of the task importance and value, that everyone is committed to the vision. In most cases this is leadership by inspiration. This can work positively when positive goals and values are espoused by the leader and genuine concern for others' well-being is exhibited. In rare cases, however, there is the visionary-charismatic leader whose power is used for antisocial purposes, leading to corruption or corporate scandal, so it is necessary to remain mindful of the dark side of charisma.

In the event business there is occasionally a scandal or two: in Sydney, Olympic Games tickets were allocated to the rich and famous leaving scarce pickings for the general public (all in the interests of 'revenue maximization'), and the marching band fiasco led to loss of face (and legal costs) when a decision to import bands from the US and Japan was labelled unpatriotic. One person's creative vision can lead to unexpected reactions despite positive intentions.

Avolio and Bass (1994) define transformational leadership in terms of how the leader affects followers, who are intended to trust, admire and respect the transformational leader. They identified three ways in which leaders transform followers:

- increasing their awareness of task importance and value
- getting them to focus on team or organizational goals
- activating their higher order needs and enabling self-actualization.

Avolio and Bass suggest that authentic transformational leadership is grounded in moral foundations, and that transformational leaders are value-driven change agents.

Doyle (2002) has a delightful descriptor of a high change business context as a 'high velocity' environment. This would undoubtedly describe the short period immediately before a major concert, festival, exhibition or conference. In his research, he suggests that the notion of a singular change agent in an organization is inappropriate and should be replaced with a much more diverse range of people, all of whom are change agents in their own right. This he suggests is not commonly considered at the recruitment stage, but recommends that it should be. He describes it as a capability to withstand challenges and stresses, and an ability to manage in ways suited to the contingencies of the environment. He suggests, for example, involving those who are already acknowledged change agents in conducting the screening process.

This argument is useful in that it prioritizes change management attributes as selection criteria for event people in senior roles. While the absence of these attributes might be discovered during a performance appraisal process, this could already be too late for remedial action. In the event business, there are few opportunities to learn and grow and mistakes can have serious repercussions, including delays to the project timeline. If, for example, a poor decision about ticket releases created a storm in the media, the whole organization could be scuttled for a time as plans were changed in response to this pressure. It would also be embarrassing for the organization and could damage morale. This highlights the importance of recognizing the pace of change in the event planning environment and selecting people who can manage well in this context.

Leadership and decision making

Leadership is exhibited in decision making. Each time a manager makes a decision there are a number of factors that come to bear. First, the leader brings his or her attributes, knowledge and experience, and the attributes of followers to the decision. These could be their personal traits, cultural background or their status in the organization (employee, volunteer, contractor). The given task needs careful consideration, perhaps the most important being the level of risk involved. Finally, every decision is situated in the wider context of the event environment or the socio-political environment in which the leader finds him or herself. Given that each time a leader acts, these factors are likely to vary, so each decision is unique. This is shown in Figure 14.2 in which the leadership behaviour/decision is illustrated at the intersection of the four factors. Note that this is not a leadership style, but a fleeting, instantaneous decision or action.

Readers might remember the example from Matthew Lazarus-Hall where the decision made in a meeting had changed by the time he reached the car park. Wave Aid, the concert he was planning, was a relief concert organized in record time (one
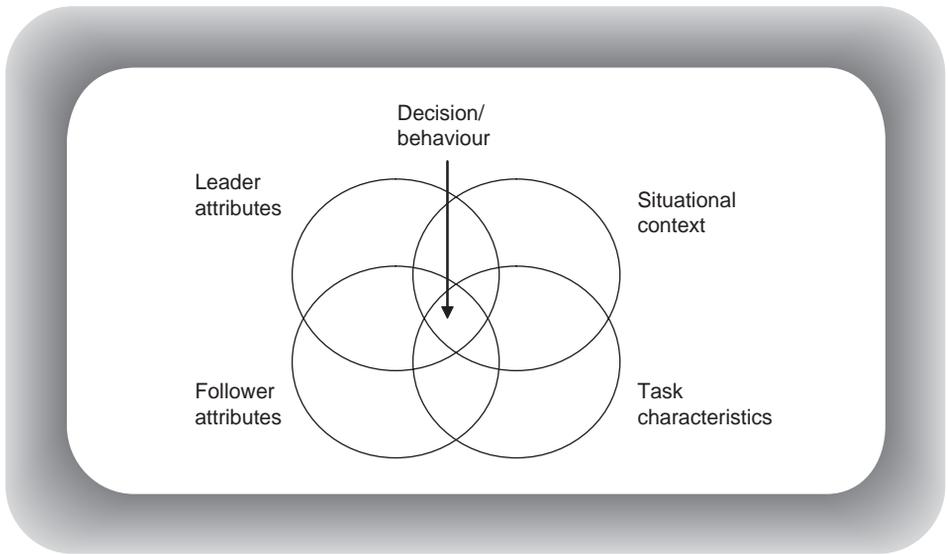
Figure 14.2   Decision-making model

month from start of planning), featuring high-profile performers. The quote that follows is a good description of the situational context. As Lazarus-Hall describes it, the planning was a roller-coaster of decision making and the level of co-operation experienced was unprecedented. However, as soon as all parties returned to their convention business mode, everyone returned to 'normal'.

> *To ensure that maximum money is raised, the event organizers are engaging suppliers to either work free of charge or at cost. All those including the bands, management, promoters and publicists, web designers and hosts involved in staging this event are donating their time free of charge.*
>
> *The income expenditure analysis will be published straight after the concert on this website, and via a press release and in print media. The net proceeds from the event will be distributed to AUSTRALIAN RED CROSS, OXFAM/COMMUNITY AID ABROAD, UNICEF, and CARE AUSTRALIA charity organizations. We urge Sydneysiders to support this event and our fellow citizens of the world (www.waveaid.com.au/about.html).*

At the end of this chapter there is a case study (14.2) about the feud between Michael Knight, Olympics Minister for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, and Sandy Hollway, head of SOCOG. This story tells of just one decision, Knight's recommendation to the Olympic Committee that Hollway not receive the highest award, an IOC gold medal for services to the Games. It illustrates the dramatic differences between the two men, Hollway adored by his staff and Knight described as being 'mean spirited', with an aggressive style, by Dick Pound (Clune, 2001).

Leadership training

Event leadership training is conducted for most major events, the main purpose being to enable participants to better understand the event environment and the people they will need to supervise. The training must therefore cover the factors in Figure 14.2.

First aid volunteers, also a source of general event information, need briefing

Situational context

Most event training starts with a description of the aims of the event, whether they are to meet a business client's brief, celebrate culture or make a profit. This section answers the broader questions of 'Why are we here?' and 'What are we trying to achieve?' This part of training may involve a presentation by the CEO of the sponsor organization, the event creative director or the fundraising manager.

Task context

The specifics of the tasks to be supervised may or may not be covered in detail depending on the diverse roles of the leaders attending training. Job-specific information is generally covered in other training sessions. However, human resource planning for rosters, uniforms, pay, meals, discipline policy, etc. is important.

Follower attributes

A volunteer speaker often features at training if leadership of volunteers is a key part of the supervisor's role. Understanding workforce composition and expectations is a training objective.

Leader attributes

A degree of self-analysis is useful, many trainers using personality profile tests and games to introduce this session. However, since leader attributes are not easily changed, the focus for this part of training is more likely to be self-acknowledged

deficiencies such as inexperience in the event environment and lack of knowledge of event conditions. Developing event leaders' knowledge of the new environment is often done using problem-based scenario exercises.

Leader decision making/behaviours

Tools and tips for leadership can be provided by experienced personnel who may be called upon in this part of the training. Specific ideas for motivating staff, planning rosters, dealing with staff problems and tackling unexpected staffing crises may be provided for discussion. In the ideal situation, leaders in training are provided with a range of problems and issues that require solutions. These can be table-based exercises, games or role plays. The illustrated plan for event leadership training in Figure 14.3 incorporates these elements in various ways.

Topic	Content
Entry music	Upbeat entry music
Welcome	Event leadership • What we will cover • The event environment • The event workforce • Event team leadership skills How we will do it • Discussion • Video • Activity and skill building What else you need to know • Who people are • Facilities • Session outline • Finish time Training objectives – list
Introduction	The biggest event you have been to and your role, e.g. wedding, office party, awards ceremony, sports match
Context for leadership	Introduce and show the welcome video (CEO)
The event environment	What are the unique features of the event environment? (flipchart)
Video	Show Part 1 of video 'The big challenges'
Your leadership skills in an event environment	Participants fill out questionnaire
Stakeholders	Who are the stakeholders (refer to notes) and fill in blanks
Expectations	As a staff member what do I expect from my leader? (flipchart) As an event leader, what do I expect from my workforce? (flipchart) What does event management expect from a leader at the event? (flipchart) As a customer what do I expect from the workforce? (flipchart)
Workforce	Paid, volunteer and contractor – motivations for each (flipchart)
Motivation	Why people volunteer (flipchart) – then show video or introduce volunteer speaker Worst case scenario: you lose your workforce (paid/volunteer/contract) How can we as leaders retain our workforce? COVERED WHAT WE NEED TO LEARN AND WHY NOW LET'S LOOK AT THE HOW

Figure 14.3 Event leadership training session plan

BREAK

The game (reason for and structure)	Reasons for using game: model arrived at with focus group, develop skills with game, deal with situations that might occur
	Game has feature days and shifts, timeline for the event (temporal nature)
	Teams given scenarios to deal with
Aim	To finish first – award for winning team
Content	Planning and co-ordinating
	Video and discussion
Play and discuss scenarios	Skill building
Content	Directing and decision making
	Video and discussion
Play and discuss scenarios	Skill building
Content	Informing and appreciating (at this point can redeploy team members)
	Video and discussion
Play and discuss scenarios	Skill building
Content	Managing time and stress, energising
	Video and discussion
Play and discuss scenarios	Skill building
Close activity	Debrief activity
Basic needs ball	Staff feedback from events shows that most complaints are about basic needs
	Think about these in detail (not just food, hot food, cold drinks etc.)
	Write label
	Labels written, ball thrown around room and labels stuck on
Goodbye	
Feedback/evaluation	

Figure 14.3 (*Continued*)

Case study 14.2

Sydney 2000 Olympic Games – another example of leadership style

Australia's Olympics minister, Michael Knight, resigned from politics on Wednesday following widespread personal criticism only three days after what were billed as the most successful Games ever.

Knight, who has become embroiled in a bitter row over his veto of a top IOC award for the chief of the Sydney Olympics organizing body, said he and his family decided last Christmas that he would quit politics after the Games.

'We decided that on the first day after the athletes' parade I would communicate with you the decision we made then – that I would leave parliament at the end of this year,' Knight said.

'I didn't want to do it the day after the closing ceremony, I wanted the athletes to have their day, I wanted the athletes to have their parade,' he said.

It took only a few days for politics to sour Sydney's post-Olympics party.

International Olympic Committee senior vice-president Dick Pound on Wednesday labelled Knight as 'mean-spirited' for blocking a top IOC award to the chief of the Sydney Games organizing body.

Australian media rallied against Knight, calling him a vindictive politician intent on 'payback' who had shattered the afterglow of the Sydney Olympics.

Pound said Knight threatened to publicly reject his IOC gold order only hours before it was bestowed on him by IOC president Juan Antonio Samaranch at the closing ceremony last Sunday, if his colleague Sandy Hollway was also granted the same honour.

Pound said the IOC board was unanimous in its wish to award Hollway its gold Olympic Order because he had 'made an exceptional contribution to the Games'.

'This was not a view apparently shared by Michael Knight and it went so far that he said he would not accept his if Sandy got one,' Pound told Australian radio.

(http://news.bbc.co.uk/sport1/low/olympics2000/955423.stm)

Reflective practice 14.2

1 From reading the above extract, how would you describe Knight's leadership?
2 Discuss the following statement, 'Leadership decisions are historically and socio-politically situated.' You may use your own examples of leader decision making.
3 Leadership training in the event context is typically short, a day or less. How can the trainer best prepare team leaders for their roles?

Chapter summary and key points

This chapter has discussed the important topic of leadership, the ability to influence people in order to achieve organizational objectives. Simply put, this means getting the work done. Leadership has been discussed in the context of short-life and long-life organizations, and research on leadership and leadership models has been evaluated in terms of 'near' and 'far' leadership.

We have returned again to the topic of project management because of its similarity to event management and have stressed the importance of effective leadership in this challenging environment, particularly where the workforce comprises volunteer and contractor employees. And we have seen that effective decision making is a key element of good leadership and that leadership training is a must for managers and supervisors in the event environment.

Revision questions

1 What is leadership?
2 How does leading differ from managing?
3 How is leadership exhibited in the project management model of <u>EMBOK</u>?
4 List and describe a leader's sources of power?
5 Select one theory of leadership, study it in detail by reading more widely, and then evaluate the usefulness of the theory to the event team leader.

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